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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Bi-National First Responder Training Scheduled for October

(Phoenix, AZ - October 11, 2004) The International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF) in conjunction with the Arizona Office of Homeland Security have partnered to provide training and training materials for a Bi-National First Responder Train-the-Trainer series that will begin in October for border communities in Arizona. Currently, San Luis, Douglas and Nogales, Arizona are slated for the train-the-trainer series.

Additionally, the IAFF donated training kits to assist the Sonora Emergency Management (Proteccion Civil) for first responders in Sonora, Mexico. These training kits include instructor and student manuals, videos and DVDs on pesticides, first responder operations, radiological weapons and emergency medical services.

The IAFF training sessions will concentrate on First Responder Operations, Confined Space Operations and Weapons of Mass Destruction and will be conducted in both English and Spanish for first responders along both sides of the international border. Specifically, the training will consist of classes and exercises developed by the International Association of Fire Fighters Hazardous Materials Training Department in conjunction with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security Office for Domestic Preparedness with support of other federal agencies such as National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health, National Institute of Environmental and Health Sciences and are being offered to build baseline response capabilities among first responders along the border. This is the same training and equipment that is used by fire fighters nationwide.

According to the Arizona Office Homeland Security Director Frank Navarrete, "Improving response effectiveness along the border is paramount to assisting Arizona and Sonora first responders effectively handle and manage events in such a way to minimize potential impact to our citizens and our communities."

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“In this age of global terrorism and accelerated international trade we are proud to participate in a partnership effort which will certainly ensure that fire fighters and paramedics are safer as they conduct emergency operations,” Harold Schaitberger, General President of the IAFF, said and added, “Once again I applaud our Arizona leadership and elected leaders for being on the cutting edge of emergency preparedness.”

Upon completion of the Train-the-Trainer session, each student will receive a certificate of completion by the International Association of Fire Fighters. Arizona fire fighters are proud to support our brother fire fighters south of the border. Their training and expertise is essential in protecting our border communities. For more information about this Bi-National Train-the-Trainer series, please contact Rich Bauer, IAFF public information officer at 602-363-6129.

About the Office of Homeland Security

The Arizona Office of Homeland Security works with local, state, federal and tribal agencies to facilitate and coordinate the state's capability and capacity to detect, prevent and protect citizens from potential terrorist attacks in Arizona by reducing vulnerabilities and enhancing response and recovery capabilities.

About the International Association of Fire Fighters

The International Association of Fire Fighters represents 260,000 professional fire fighters in the United States and Canada. The IAFF diligently works with state and local affiliates to ensure the issues pertaining to public safety and fire fighters are always at the front of political dialog within the two countries.